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— Analytical • Class • Interpretation —

— OF —

— THE EPISTLE TO —

— THE ROMANS. —



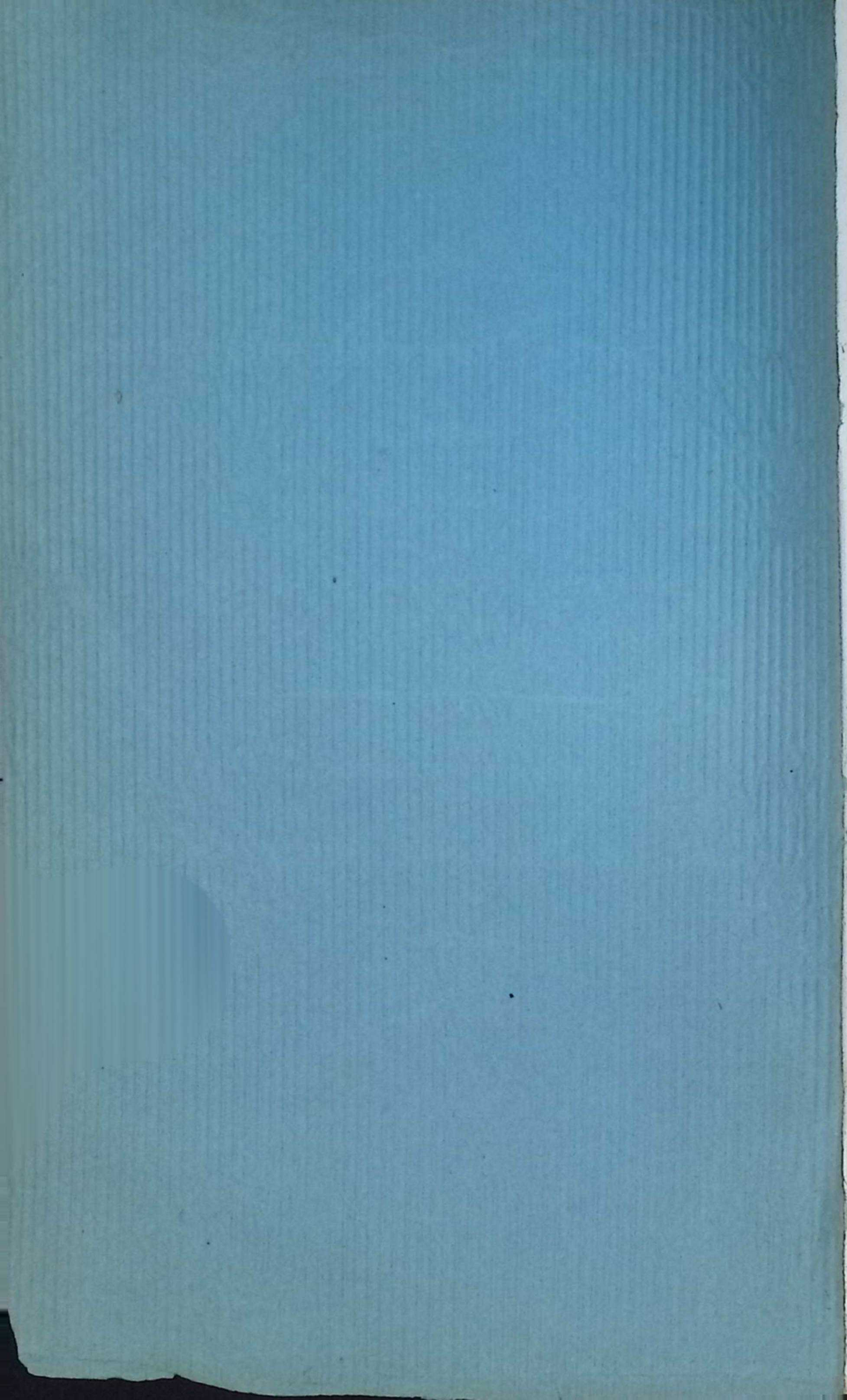
BY PROF. H. C. ALEXANDER,

— Union Theological Seminary —

— IN —

VIRGINIA.





Examination on Romans.

Prepare on Special Introduction.

Put out your strength on the Chapters I-IX.

You will be responsible for everything therein.

The brunt of the Examination will fall on Chaps V - IX. Expound these very carefully.

Saturate yourself with my notes. Be perfectly at home in the logical connection of the whole book.

Translate chaps XII & XIII.

Be familiar with the theory of Placens, with that of Realism & with the lectures on Inspiration generally.

Establish the integrity of the last two chapters & genuineness & place of doxology.

By order of

Dr. Alexander.

ANALYTICAL CLASS INTERPRETATIONS.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

GENERAL ANALYSIS.

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The book is composed of sixteen chapters. Of these the first eleven are *doctrinal*, and the remaining five *practical*. It is common to divide the book into three parts. The first of these three parts would then comprise the first eight chapters: the second; the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters; and the third the remainder of the epistle. The mnemonic word for the whole book is SALVATION; for the first eight chapters, JUSTIFICATION; for the next three, VINDICATION; and for the last five, APPLICATION.

The *twofold* division of the book is on the whole perhaps the most exactly logical and the one that seems most in harmony with the method of partition universally adopted in the case of all the other epistles, unless we should except that to the Galatians.

Agreeably to this twofold division of the book of Rom., the first eleven chapters have been well said to embody the Pauline *Theology*, the five concluding chapters the Pauline *Ethics*. The theme of the whole book is SALVATION BY GRACE.

The detailed analysis of chapters (xii—xvi) is postponed till this final portion of the book is overtaken in the daily work of the class room. Regarding now simply the first eleven chapters, the dogmatic portion of the treatise, we find this part of the book also to be susceptible of a twofold division.

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The first eight chapters would then fall into one group; the ninth, tenth, and eleventh, into another. The first of these subdivisions would then constitute the Pauline *Soteriology* (*Soterology*), and the second the Pauline *Theology*. The first eight chapters embrace the main discussion, and consequently may be said to make up the doctrinal core of the book.

But these first eight chapters may also be distributed into two groups. The theme of this portion of the book may be said to be JUSTIFICATION: CONSIDERED in its CAUSES, and in its EFFECTS. Speaking broadly, Justification is considered in relation to its *causes*, in the first ^{four} ~~five~~ chap.: and in relation to its *effects*, in the sixth, seventh, and eight chapters. Speaking strictly, the first eleven verses of chap. v: give an epitome of the effects (or consequences) of Justification, and thus form a sort of prelude to the subsequent exhibition of the fruits of grace.

But the first ^{four} ~~five~~ chapters may themselves be further subdivided into two parts. The first of these parts contains what has reference to the *Subjective* Cause; and the second, what has reference to the *Objective* Cause. The Subjective Cause is the one that is chiefly brought into prominence, and (speaking broadly) is considered in the first four chapters—whereas ^{the objective cause is touched upon towards} the close of chapter III. [vv. (22—26)],

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where the two Causes are spoken of in very intimate connection; is distinctly involved in what is said in chapter V. (1—11); and has a fundamental relation to the topic discussed in chapter V: (12—21) [Imputation].

Under the head of the Subjective Cause, the apostle demonstrates the NECESSITY (and *Fact*) of a Justification by *Faith*

What is meant by the *Subjective* Cause is, what the man does *himself* for his justification; by the *Objective* Cause, what is done outside him and *for* him by God. The apostle proves that there is strictly speaking no subjective *cause* at all, the real cause is all *objective*. man does nothing, God does all.

So far as there can be said to be *any* Subjective Cause, it is not meritorious but purely *instrumental*, and is FAITH *alone*. The Objective and *only* MERITORIOUS cause is the WORK OF CHRIST. So that the Subjective Cause is equivalent to the *means*, the Objective Cause to the *grounds*, of Justification.

SPECIAL ANALYSIS,

OF CHAPTERS I—III

The grand thing aimed at in these chapters is the establishment of justification by grace, as opposed to the Jewish doctrine of justification by *works*. As the contention

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OF CHAPTERS I—III.

is against the Jewish dogmas and prejudices, the argument is throughout *negative* in its character. The thing to be proved is that no man can be justified, in whole or in part, by any works of his own. The conclusion is that if any man be justified at all (which is conceded and afterwards proved by scripture) it must be by *grace*.

It is moreover demonstrated at a later stage in the discussion (at iv: 4, 5:) that a justification by *faith* is tantamount to a gratuitous justification.

It is presupposed that there are only two modes of justification rationally conceivable. The one is by *works*, the other is *not* by works —i. e. is a justification gratuitously (or by *faith* alone).

It is assumed (because notorious) that unenlight^eened by the accepted gospel man depends for his justification exclusively upon his own works. The same thing is then proved (in chapter II.) of the Jews. This argument against the Jews, being the principal one under this head, is preceded by an exhibition of the Divine justice and impartiality. This is, of course, to show in advance that the Jew cannot screen himself from the divine anger in case he had sinned.

Chapter III. opens with a consideration of certain Jewish cavils. then the two arguments are massed, and reinforced

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OF CHAPTERS I.

by additional proofs from scripture, and the case is at length finally summed up for both classes, and the conclusion announced that no man can be justified by works.

The close of the chapter is an exhibition of the *gracious* method of justification provided in the GOSPEL.

It is further assumed that as the totality of mankind is made up of *Jews* and *Gentiles* and of no others, whatever may be fairly concluded in respect of each one of these classes may be fairly concluded in respect of the entire race of Adam. The precise thing to be proved respecting each one of these classes is that it is subject to condemnation and *ergo* not justified, or justifiable, by works. First the case of the *Gentile* is taken up, and it is proved (in the first chapter) that the Gentiles are *sinners* and consequently *condemned*—in spite of all their natural efforts to obtain justification.

ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION,

OF CHAPTER I.

Paul introduces the epistle by a reference to his own Divine legation and apostleship, and to the gospel, incarnation and resurrection, of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then follow greetings to the church at Rome, and a commendation of their piety. He assures them of his affection for them and of the interest they have in his prayers. He mentions his long cherished, but hitherto thwarted, desire (and

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OF CHAPTERS I.

prayer) to be permitted to visit them and thus minister to their spiritual profit

He was ready, when providence should favour the step, to proclaim the gospel even in Rome. He gloried in the gospel, as the indispensable and chosen vehicle of God's saving power both to Jew and Gentile.

Upon those unsheltered by the gospel the punitive anger of God was universally denounced and manifested. This is the point to be proved in this chapter. The existence and righteousness of God are postulated, and it is assumed (and affirmed) that a righteous God will punish sin.

All that remains in this chapter is to show that the pagan world are guilty of sin. He points out in detail that they are guilty both of *impiety* and *immorality*. The proof is that though enjoying the light of nature, they have deliberately stultified themselves and violated the dictates of their own consciences. They are therefore beyond the pale of excuse. The notorious facts in relation to their crimes against God, and against nature, are then particularly recited.

Because of their base idolatries, God gave them up to the dominion of unnatural vices, and to the physical and moral ruin consequent on their obstinate and criminal infatuation.

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OF CHAPTER II.

The whole of this chapter is really addressed to the *Jew*; although he is not mentioned until the 9th. verse and not formally addressed before the 17th. verse. The attack is masked at first, and only gradually unveiled. Certain obvious facts and principles, which would have been readily admitted in their application to the *Pagan* world but which are equally applicable to the adherents of Judaism, are presented at the outset of this special discussion. The main point aimed at is that the Jew cannot denounce the crimes of the Gentiles, and flatter himself with the thought of immunity, when he is guilty of the same crimes himself. The reason is that God is strictly impartial, no less than infinitely righteous, and that the question as to *the thing done*, and not the question as to who did it, will determine the character of the Divine sentence in the premises.

Nor could the Jew obtain exemption on the plea of special favour under some kind of relaxation of the stern demands of justice. God's forbearance was designed to make them penitent, not to encourage them in presumption. The successive increments of sinning on their part, were only adding hour by hour to the fearful hoard of their responsibility.

The day of final account was not to be permanently avoided, and when the infatuated legalist stood before that

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OF CHAPTER II.

awful bar he would discover to his cost that nothing but *perfect obedience* would then be of any avail to him. The issue of that great assize would then be found to turn not on men's *works* but on their *deeds*; not on their *professions* but on their true *character*. Those who sought the prizes of eternity in a perfect way of holy living would be correspondingly *rewarded*; whereas those whose lives were ungodly would be everlastingly *punished*.

The Jew, on account of his superior privileges, would fare even worse than the Gentile upon the exposure of the slightest dereliction.

The doom of the heathen, though, would involve no impeachment of the fairness and impartiality of the judge. The heathen, it is true, do not have the written law. But neither will they be judged by the written law. They will be judged (and condemned) by the law of natural conscience.

As he proceeds the apostle unmasks his guns, and fires without pretence at further concealment straight into the faces of his antagonists. The burden of his argument and invective is, that the boasted advantages and privileges of the chosen people, *if they transgressed* only rendered them the more inexcusable in the eyes of a merciful, a just, an omniscient God. The dreadful indictment he brings against them is, that of flagrant criminality in regard to matters

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OF CHAPTER II.

concerning which they had haughtily reproved the undoubtedly guilty—but undoubtedly less guilty—pagan. By precept and example too, they (who gloried in their possession and discernment of the law, and in their peculiar relation to Jehovah) had preached light when they themselves walked in darkness: had inculcated piety when they themselves were profane; and eulogized virtue when they themselves were grossly and scandalously immoral.

No recourse could be had in this emergency to the alleged efficacy of the rite of *Circumcision*. The genuine theocratic Judaism was worthy of all honour, and the ancient sacrament instituted by God was (in its proper place) of indubitable value. But the mere outward show of Judaism was worthless, and its most pompous ceremonial (unless informed by heart-felt obedience) a hollow mockery. Circumcision had its uses, but only *faultless obedience* could meet the requisitions of Divine Justice. An uncircumcised Gentile if he kept the law would be more acceptable to God than the proudest Pharisee whose conduct was reprehensible, and whose heart was not right towards God.

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ANALYTICAL EXPOSITION

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OF CHAPTER III.

Before massing his proofs, and bringing in his verdict against *both* classes of offenders (Gentiles and Jews) the apostle proceeds to take notice of one or two Jewish cavils that might obstruct the full force of his argument, the first of these cavils was that according to the Pauline logic the supposed advantages of the chosen people were altogether imaginary. The writer denies the legitimacy of this inference. The superiority of the Jew in privilege was manifold, and was not affected by the Pauline reasoning or doctrine. The grand advantage of the chosen race grew out of the fact that they were the custodians (and earliest beneficiaries) of the Divine oracles—and especially of the Divine *promises*. This, he assures them, was an empty honour, but a solid and unspeakable benefit. True, according to the Pauline teaching, many of the Israelites did not live up to their privileges, and were unfaithful to their trust. But, asks the apostle, did the unfaithfulness of a portion of the Jewish people, render the promise of God nugatory to the remainder? Such a thought he rejects with pious horror. *Man* may be unfaithful, but God is eternally true to all his engagements. Because a certain number of Jews have broken their word, Jehovah will not fail to be true to *his* word. He will reward, and he will punish, according to DESERT with inexorable justice and inviolable truth. David recognized this when he uttered the

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OF CHAPTER III.

language, "that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged." Just here it seemed to occur to the writer that a *fresh* cavil (wretched though it was) might possibly be suggested to an obstinate objector even by the plain and unsparring words of the Psalmist himself. The cavil would be *this*. If (as the Psalmist teaches) my sin is the occasion of *justifying* God, why am I punished for it? If my wrong-doing only sets off in a brighter light Jehovah's righteousness, with what justice am I condemned? The apostle in a rejoinder points out that the objection rests on the assumption that human *sin*, in *any* case, renders the Divine *righteousness* more evident and illustrious, and that therefore sin is unpunishable. The premiss he admits: the conclusion he denounces as a monstrous *non-sequitur*, and a miserable and pernicious falsehood.

The position of the objector would overthrow the whole *judicial* system of the universe. This was obvious; for *any* man—even the most depraved heathen—might raise this plea on the day of Judgment. Moreover this position would also overthrow the whole *moral* system of the universe. The abominable maxim calumniously attributed by their enemies to the christian teachers would be *true*, that the end justifies the means and the worse a man became the more acceptable he would be to God.

(Turn over for page 12.)

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OF CHAPTER III.

The Jews (with whom Paul here identifies himself) were thus cut off from every pretext of defence or palliation.

Both Jews and Gentiles had alike been proved to be by nature in every instance under condemnation. He now goes on to mass his proofs from scripture in reference to both classes, although the context shows plainly that his mind is throughout chiefly occupied with the case of the Jews. The citations are from the Psalter and the prophesy of Isaiah, and establish beyond question the universal senselessness, sinfulness, cruel wickedness, and utter Godlessness of mankind.

The only remaining chance of escape for the Jewish objector would be on the ground of the allegation that these denunciations of scripture were directed against the *heathen*, or at the very worst only against *gross offenders* amongst the children of Isarel. The remorseless answer is that *what the law pronounces, it pronounces with an application to those who are under it*. It follows that all Jews as well as all Gentiles are by nature under the sentence of God's violated law. Every man who relies on his works of any kind will accordingly stand self-condemned at the bar of heaven: and this for the reason that (as has now been completely proved)

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OF CHAPTER III.

there is no such thing possible as the justification of any man "by the deeds of the law." This conclusion the apostle fortifies, by a passing argument (*e contrario*) from the *office* of the law, which was to convince of SIN. But sin means *guilt* and guilt means *condemnation*.

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OF CHAPTER IV.

So far the apostle has distinctly evinced the NECESSITY (rather than the *fact*) of *justification* by GRACE, both for Jews and Gentiles. In the latter part of the preceding chapter he had exhibited in a general way this gracious method of justification on the ground of Christ's propitiatory sacrifice. He had also cited the whole of the Old Testament scriptures in proof of the proposition that God's method of justifying the sinner is not based on human obedience, but (the implication is) on *Divine favour* on account of the accepted righteousness of another—even of our great substitute.

The writer next proceeds to dislodge the Jews from one more "refuge of lies" in which they confidently trusted, namely their descent from Abraham; and in doing so he incidentally furnishes clear and undoubted proof from scripture (of what indeed the Jews admitted) viz. that justification in some mode is possible to the sinner, and that that mode is by *faith alone*.

At the very close of the last chapter Paul had pointed out how the method of justification was the same for the Jew and for the Gentile, and how this naked fact demolished at a blow the vaunted superiority of the one class over the other. This sweeping overthrow of Jewish prepossessions and prejudices involved the overthrow of the Divine Law, which had been most fully and articulately given by

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OF CHAPTER *IV*

Moses, for he had already shown that that law had been completely satisfied (as it could have been in no other way) by the Lord Jesus Christ.

What then became of their hope of salvation on the ground of *their natural connection with ABRAHAM*? If the apostle's argument was a sound one of course such a hope was without foundation. The point, however, is so important a one that the apostle examines it carefully, and makes it the subject of consideration throughout the entire chapter. Besides, the case of the great Jewish patriarch yields new and striking evidence on the main question that has been discussed in the preceding chapters.

The precise thing the writer aims to prove is that Abraham was himself not justified by works of his own, and therefore was justified by free *grace*. The unavoidable inference was that as Abraham did not have merit enough to avail for himself, he could not have enough to avail for others: furthermore, that if such a favourite of heaven could not save himself by his own efforts (*a fortiori*) much less could his inferior descendants. The first proof that Abraham was not justified by works, but justified *graciously*, is drawn from the explicit statement in Genesis that he was justified by *faith*. This, the apostle argues, was tantamount to an avowment that he had been justified by *grace*. This argument

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amounts to this, that there are only two conceivable modes of justification, viz. the one *for* DESERT and the one *without reference to* desert. Now it was obvious that a man who made no pretence of meritorious obedience of his own, but *relied* simply on the righteousness of another, was gratuitously justified. The scriptural testimony that Abraham was justified by his bare *belief* in God's promise was equivalent to a scriptural testimony that he was justified *freely*, or by grace.

Nor was such a justification without yet ampler sanction in God's word. It is a man justified in precisely this free way upon whom David pronounces his benediction in the Psalter. This is clear from the circumstance that it is not a man *without* iniquities, or without *sins*, who is here blessed, but a man "whose iniquities are *forgiven*, and whose sins are *covered*," and "to whom the Lord *will not impute* sin." *The law* (as Paul had elsewhere shown) could tolerate nothing short of immaculate *perfection*. Only *the Gospel* provides for the justification of one confessedly *guilty*.

The same conclusion, as to Abraham, is confirmed by the fact that he was *justified* BEFORE he was *circumcised*. This proves not only generally that he could not have been justified by *works*, but especially that he could not have been justified by CIRCUMCISION—the boasted Jewish sacrament—

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OF CHAPTER IV.

as *opus operatum*. He received, too, this sacrament at the very time he did, as the sign and seal of a covenant made with an uncircumcised man, because God meant to intimate that he was to be the father of all the faithful—whether they should be *believing Gentiles* or *believing Jews*.

The same thing followed from the *terms* of the covenant with Abraham, which were gracious and not legal. To affirm the contrary was to render the promise of that covenant nugatory. The notion (he argues *e contrario*) that Abraham was justified by the *law*, moreover involved a contradiction: for the office of the law is (not to justify but) to CURSE and to CONDEMN. So intimate was the connection between these two correlates, that were there no law there could, obviously, be no transgression; and of course no condemnatory judgment: but once given a law to be transgressed, and once given *the transgression* of that law, and the *detection* and *multiplication* of that transgression became thereupon the solitary function of the law in its bearing upon the transgressor. Therefore, again, Abraham was justified not by works but by faith: and this (as was previously shown) involved the idea of a gratuitous justification as opposed to one grounded upon any imaginable human merit. It follows once more that the Abrahamic promise stands good to the entire spiritual seed, whether believing Jews or believing

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Gentiles. Abraham is thus the father of the faithful in the most unlimited sense whether they be found among the Israelites or among the heathen. This had been plainly stipulated to him where it was promised that he was to be the ancestor of many nations, and of a seed as multitudinous as the stars.

This great promise Abraham believed without wavering, standing in the presence of the omnipotent and omniscient Jehovah, though in the face of what to the eye of natural reason was an absolutely insuperable obstacle to its accomplishment. He could see no path out of the difficulty, but he knew God was wise enough to solve the problem. He was as good as dead, and his wife was still childless: but he relied upon that God whose prerogative it is to raise the dead and cheer the desolate. This imposing instance of a faith that triumphs over every skeptical objection, and even over impossibilities, was given us as an example for our guidance and encouragement. Isaac was a signal type of the Lord Jesus Christ; who died on account of our sins, and rose again in order to justify us.

Study carefully
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OF CHAPTER V.

With this chapter the apostle turns from a consideration of the CAUSES, to a consideration of the EFFECTS, of Justification. Allowing for a considerable amount of digressive (and sub-digressive) matter from verse 12th. to the close of the chapter, the entire section of the book embracing chaps. V, VI, VII, and VIII, is wholly taken up with the discussion. As already pointed out in the general analysis of the book, the first eleven verses of the fifth chapter constitute an epitome of the effects of justification by free grace. These effects are all said to come to us "through Jesus Christ our Lord." This seems to be the connecting thought between the summary at the beginning of the chapter of the consequences of justification by faith in Christ, and the exhibition that is made in the remainder of the chapter, of the Imputation of Christ's righteousness to his elect people after the analogy of the Imputation of Adam's guilt to all his ordinary descendants. The glorious righteousness of another (even of Christ) in other words, is made over to us and becomes truly ours on the principle of *imputation*, just as the accursed guilt of another (even of our father Adam) is made over to us and becomes truly ours on the same principle of imputation. In this discussion of Imputation there is a conjoint treatment of the *Objective* CAUSE of justification (which had been presented towards the close of the third chapter) and

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OF CHAPTER V.

of the EFFECTS of justification, which is almost the exclusive topic of this whole section—but which is notwithstanding of very subordinate interest in this particular paragraph.

The first effect of justification by faith that is mentioned is peace—Reconciliation to God and consequent tranquility in the breast. It is Jesus Christ who introduced us into this gracious condition, by satisfying the claims of justice and thus removing the enmity of God. Associated with *peace* of conscience, is *joy* in the Holy Ghost. So extraordinary is our privilege that we are enabled to rejoice even in discouragements and *afflictions*. The reason we can do this is that we are made to see and feel that tribulation is the discipline of patience, patience the school of tried and reassuring christian character, and tried christian character the basis of a new and stable *hope* of eternal glory and felicity. This hope (unlike earthly expectations) will never disappoint us. We argue this from the fact that we are objects of the Divine *love*. The delightful impression and consciousness of that love is diffused through our hearts by the operation of the Holy Ghost—another of the gifts of God to the believer. The *fact* that we are the objects of God's love, is proved in the most overwhelming manner by the undoubted fact that Christ died for us. The argument is short and easy. It is just within the bounds of credibility

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that one might be found who should be willing to sacrifice his life for a man who was not only one of *probity* but also one of *kindness* and *loveableness*. The amazing circumstance about the sacrifice of Christ is that he died for us when so far from being righteous we were *wicked* and so far from being morally attractive or personally beloved we were *foes*. Now the death of Christ for sinners and enemies is a most cogent and indubitable proof of our final salvation. The argument is again easy, and is *a fortiori*. It is this. If when these gigantic obstacles stood in the way the love of Jesus impelled him to renounce heaven and submit to crucifixion for us, it is evident that he must love us so much that now that these obstacles are all removed and Christ himself has risen from the grave and been seated at the right hand of power he will *not* fail to accomplish the ends of redemption and save us in his eternal kingdom. If when everything stood in the way he loved us unto *death*, now that nothing stands in the way, and he is in no peril of ignominy or death, he will beyond question save us by his glorious and immortal *life*. We shall thus be eternally saved in heaven—and saved too, rejoicing in the God of our salvation and in Jesus Christ his son our Lord and our Redeemer, to whom and to whom alone we are indebted for his matchless work of reconciliation and all the unspeakable benefits connected with* it or flowing from it.

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The apostle now goes on to show *that the principle* on which the entire righteousness of Christ is thus made over to the believer is (as has been implied in the previous discussion) the same with that on which the guilt of Adam's first sin is made over to his ordinary posterity; viz. the principle of imputation. The admitted fact and doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin is introduced to illustrate and confirm the disputed fact and doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The long paragraph at the close of the chapter is divisible into five parts. The first part is the 12th. verse, where the parallel between Adam and Christ is indicated but not fully stated. The second part is made up of the 13th. and 14th. verses, where the statement in the second clause of verse 12th. affirming that human death is the penalty of Adam's sin, is *proved*. The third part is composed of verses 15th., 16th., and 17th., where the parallel is further drawn out, and where (especially) it is *limited*. The fourth part occupies the 18th. and 19th. verses, where (in two successive and varied statements) the parallel which was imperfectly indicated in the 12th. verse is restated, and for the first time stated unambiguously, and completed. The fifth part covers the 20th. and 21st. verses and contains two remarks intended to enhance the superior magnitude of the glorious effects of *grace* over that of the accursed effects of *disobedience*.

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OF CHAPTER V.

The apostle begins this famous paragraph by calling the attention of his readers to the fact, that agreeably to the exhibition he had made in the previous chapters (and summed up in the preceding verse of this chapter) as to God's method of justifying the believing sinner, there is a remarkable and instructive parallel between the mode in which Christ's righteousness though the righteousness of another becomes our righteousness and the mode in which Adam's guilt though the guilt of another becomes our guilt. The mode of transfer in both cases is that of legal or forensic *imputation*. Having asserted the imputation of Adam's guilt, the apostle proceeds to make good that point before advancing to the direct assertion of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is the matter that chiefly concerns him. The proof he gives that human death (meaning by the term death any and all forms of penal evil) is the penalty visited upon the race on the judicial ground of the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin, is a very simple and at the same time a very intelligible and conclusive one. It is this. Sin from its very definition always involves the violation of some law. But the law violated in this case could not have been the law of Moses; for physical death and other (and prior) forms of penal evil were prevalent in the world before the law of Moses had ever been promulgated. Once

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more; the law violated could not have been the law of conscience, for during that period (as during all other periods) penal evils were visited upon infants and irresponsible persons who (being guiltless of actual transgression) had *never violated* the law of conscience. The deduction is inevitable that the sin for which they suffered could not have been in the personal sense of that term *proprium peccatum*, but must have been *alienum peccatum*. In other words the law violated could not in the first instance have been violated by their own personal act but by the personal act of some one else, standing in their room and stead. The conclusion is irresistible that the law that was violated by our ancestor in the Garden of Eden: which is precisely the thing that the apostle set out to prove.

Just at this point he turns aside to comment on the assertion that Adam is a type of Christ, so as to illustrate and *limit* the parallel between the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the imputation of Adam's guilt. The illustration of the parallel is only in the matter of details, and for this reason need not be further noticed in this analytical view of the contents of the section. The restriction of the parallel deserves a more careful attention at our hands. The particulars in which the parallel is here restricted by the apostle are not meant to fill out an exhaustive enumeration. Such particulars are mentioned as would serve to

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enhance the incomparable excellency and glory of the scheme of grace.

The three points in which the parallel is declared to be incomplete are the following. *First.* In that "the former dispensation is much *more mystericus* than the latter." It is easier to believe that a being of infinite benevolence would on the ground of one man's righteousness confer unspeakable and eternal blessings upon myriads of other men than that such a being would on the ground of one man's sin visit upon myriads of other men unspeakable and eternal calamities and distresses. *Secondly.* In that "the *benefits* of the one dispensation far exceed the evils of the other." The condemnation was for one sin; the justification was from many sins: That this is so is obvious, for the *guilt* visited upon the race was only the guilt of Adam's first sin: but the guilt *remitted* is the guilt of the innumerable sins afterwards committed and expiated in the blood of Calvary. Christ thus saves from far more than the guilt of Adam's transgression. *Thirdly* In that Christ not only saves us (in a negative way) from the evils of sin, "but introduces us into a state of positive and eternal blessedness."

Having thus accentuated, and yet guarded, the parallel, the apostle now proceeds to restate it, and this time in sharp-cut outlines and symmetrical completeness. This re-

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statement—and complete statement—is made in two forms. In the first form, the statement is, that we are treated as sinners because of what Adam did; and in the second form, the statement is that we are so treated because we *deserve* to be so treated—are treated as sinners because (by virtue of our federal union with Adam, who is our Covenant Head as well as our natural father) we are *sinner*s. The meaning is, not that we sinned in Adam *personally*, nor in any sense *actually*; but that we sinned in Adam *representatively* and *constructively*, and yet indubitably and most truly *sinned* in him. The statement in the first form is substantially, that as through the first offence of Adam condemnation was visited upon *all* who were connected with him by nature, so through the one satisfaction of Christ justification was conferred upon all who were connected with *him* by grace. The statement in the *second* form is virtually this: that penalty is visited upon the race, because guilt had been incurred by the race; and correspondingly rewards bestowed because merit has been established: for as by the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many (connected with Adam) were constituted forensically guilty, so by the obedience of the one man (Christ) the many (connected with Christ) were constituted forensically righteous.

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The triumphant apostle winds up with a comparison of the two dispensations as to their *effects*. The law (to which incidentally, but very signally, all transgression must be traced back, as its occasion, not its proper cause) was superadded to convince of sin and to multiply offence. But under the Gospel, *Grace* has far transcended in the magnitude and momentous character of its effects all that sin has ever accomplished. The number of the saved will hereafter doubtless largely exceed that of the lost. Christians will be raised higher than the station from which Adam fell. Finally the benefits of redemption extend beyond the race of man. If in the baleful sway of death over the world we may see the tyrannous and remorseless reign of sin, so too in the exaltation of believers to eternal life we may, and do, behold (and in infinitely grander proportions) the glorious and victorious reign of *grace*, by means of righteousness, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour

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The apostle here continues the consideration of the effects, or consequences of Justification. Having in the preceding chapter given a rapid epitome of those effects, and then turned aside to discuss the doctrine of Imputation, he now returns to the general subject already introduced in the opening verses of the chapter and proceeds to insulate, and discuss separately, a single *one* of the effects of justification, and that the most important of them all, viz., SANCTIFICATION. This new topic occupies two entire chapters, the sixth and seventh. In the sixth chapter Sanctification is considered chiefly in relation to the Gospel, in the seventh chiefly in relation to the Law.

The apostle begins by anticipating and refuting an objection that might now be raised to the doctrine of free grace and gratuitous justification by the Jewish Pharisaic legalist and moralist. This objection is, that the doctrine must logically end in *Antinomianism*—or the theory (rejected in common by Paul and the objector) that we may live as we please, regardless of the requirements of the moral law.

Paul's rejoinder is a very simple but decisive one. It is, that on the assumption of the truth of the Gospel plan of justification, by virtue of our union with Christ we participate in the benefits of his vicarious death, one of which

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is the sanctifying Spirit. The Gospel plan involved that when Christ was crucified the believer was crucified along with him.

There is at once an analogy and a causal connection between the physical death and resurrection of Christ and the spiritual death and resurrection of believers. As the Saviour died (under the curse of the law) to the guilt of our imputed sins, and then (through the Divine omnipotence) rose again to a new life that was free from the domination of any alien power and wholly devoted to God; so we (by virtue of our union with Christ) *died to the guilt of sin* that we might *live* in the practice of holiness.

We are, at our representation, baptized by the Holy Ghost into the Redeemer's atoning death, so as to derive from that death all its blessed consequences.

Furthermore, as Christ when he expired on the cross expired once for all, so *we* at our conversion died once for all to the guilt of sin (and to the law as a rule of justification) and should consider ourselves as ever after (in a spiritual sense) *alive* from the dead and the regenerate children of that immaculate One whose name is Holy.

Thus the Gospel plan of justification so far from encouraging licentiousness ensures the believer's sanctification. It had been proved (before) that this was the only scheme of justification under which the curse of sin was in reality

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broken. It had now been proved in addition that the removal of the *curse* involved (in reason and in fact) the removal of the consequences of that curse—and of course that prime consequence,—*indwelling sin*. At the very moment of the new-birth the sovereign *dominion* of sin was annihilated forever. It is implied, too, that the remaining *power* and ultimately the very *being* of sin in the soul of the believer shall be extirpated.

But the sanctification of the believer although thus certainly secured, is secured in a totally different way from the imaginary one of the fatalist.

The believer continues to be a free and accountable agent, and it is at once his privilege and bounden *duty* to co-operate in this matter with the Almighty author of his spiritual life.

If (as had been seen) the *END*, sanctification in the case of the believer was secured, it was no less so than were the *means*, holy living.

The apostle accordingly exhorts his readers most earnestly to the indispensable duty of leading lives of new obedience such as became the elect of heaven and the saints of God.

To this end he encourages them with the precious assurance that sin should no longer lord it over them, and that

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because they were now emancipated from the bondage of the law and introduced into a state of grace and salvation.

The remainder of the chapter is an illustration from the parallel case of ordinary servitude. It follows alike from the nature of slavery itself and from the nature and limitation of the human will, that (as our Lord himself so pointedly taught) supreme obedience can be rendered to only one master at a time. The only way, consequently, in which any one already in servitude can hope to be enabled to serve a new lord is by release from the authority and power of the old one. Once enslaved, however, to the second owner, obedience to the new lord is secured by the very terms of the relations. A slave is a slave. Servitude is incompatible with freedom; and there is no intermediate condition.

Now the believer has been released from the dominion of his old lord, sin, and subjected in sweet and voluntary and yet (in one sense) servile bonds to his new lord, righteousness. He therefore exhorts them to *lives* consonant with such changed relations. He pleads with them to abandon the fruitless courses of vanity and strive for the precious guerdon of holiness. Death was the ruthless hire of sin; but the gift of eternal life was the rich and sure reward of faith.

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This chapter is linked on closely with the 14th verse of the preceding. The two chapters are like two oscillating circles, and come together at this one point. The sixth chapter is like the first of two circles which touch one another only at one point, that after reaching the point of contact sweeps round again along the path already traversed. The image is not a perfect one. The circle after arriving at the limit of its onward movement returns again to the point from which it started; but the discussion of the 6th chapter of Romans upon reaching the mark indicated by the 14th verse makes no further advance but still does not retreat, or retire by degrees to the starting point; it simply repeats and at the same time expands itself under a varied form. The discussion that immediately follows the statement of iv. 14, is in a manner a continuation of the discussion that preceded it; but not in the direction indicated in that verse.

The statement of the 14th verse is the encouraging assurance that the Law should never more exert the old imperial dominion over them, and for the very good reason that they were now liberated from the bondage of the law and breathing the air of *grace*.

It now behoved the apostle to explain and vindicate the assertion that the believer is exonerated from the claims

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of the law. It was equally incumbent on him to point out *why it was* that the release from the yoke of the law was indispensable in order to sanctification.

Thus (as already indicated) the scope of chapter VI is that the gospel scheme of justification makes ample provision for sanctification; the scope of chapter VII, that the legal scheme makes no adequate provision for sanctification and thus fails to secure it.

The Law, however, has an important and decisive office to perform, in the case even of the believing sinner, which the apostle unfolds more fully and articulately here than anywhere else in the course of his writings. That office is a double one; to convince the sinner of his sin, and thus (and by other means) to lead him to the saviour. The main business of the law is to convince the transgressor of his utter inability to save himself; and accordingly this is the aspect of the subject to which the writer principally confines himself in the discussion of this chapter.

He opens by introducing an illustration drawn from the familiar law of marriage, and has a double purpose in so doing. He does so *first* to explain how it is that the averment (so obnoxious to Jewish prejudice) can be true, viz. that a man can never *cease* to be "UNDER the law." The apostle means that the redeemed sinner ^{is} not bound to keep the

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law as the condition of being JUSTIFIED at the bar of God. Of course he was still bound to keep the law as the condition of *pleasing* God by meeting the preceptive requirement of the law that is eternally binding on every creature, and under an additional obligation of love and gratitude to his adorable Saviour.

The Pharisaic cavil would be grounded on the assumption that the law is of perpetual obligation. Not so! argues Paul: it is a matter of notoriety that even in the case of human law there is one thing, viz. death, which can and does *dissolve* the legal obligation. When the lawful husband dies the wife is at full liberty under the law of the land to marry again. Surely then it is not unreasonable (he contends) to assert that death may dissolve legal obligations (in a certain sense of that expression) even in the case of the justified sinner.

It matters not that in the case of the sinner the death which thus dissolves the legal obligation is his own death to the law (and to the guilt of sin) by virtue of his union with the Lord Jesus Christ. To have made the parallel literally exact the apostle would have had to say that *the law itself* was dead. This mode of speech he carefully avoids, and doubtless for two reasons. First out of deference to the Jews, and secondly out of deference to the law itself.

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There is a most vital sense in which the law so far from being dead "dieth no more." This caution on the part of the writer especially when taken in connection shows plainly that he meant to intimate that the claims of the law were not absolutely annulled.

In brief, that the law was indeed abrogated as a rule of justification, but remained in full force as a directory of conduct and a guide of life.

In this manner the illustration served to explain *his meaning in the first clause of VI. 14.* But it equally serves to show *the necessity of release* from the law in order to sanctification. For just as the wife is guilty of bigamy who marries a second husband during the life-time of the first; so there must be death to the law (our former husband) before we can be united to our new husband Christ. But it is sufficiently evident that without union with Christ there can be no benefit derived from Christ's sanctifying spirit. This is undoubtedly the main point of the chapter. The apostle goes on to argue to the same conclusion from the experience of his christian readers. Before their conversion they were under the tyrannous dominion of their inbred corruptions, and the law itself was subsidized by the powers of darkness in the interest of immorality.

This however implies no impeachment of the law itself;

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which is innocent and immaculate in the whole transaction, and the exact copy of the Divine perfections. So far from meaning to teach that there is any accord between the law and sin, he would deliberately affirm that he was indebted to the law for the first and only information which ever apprized him not only of what was sinful, but of what an evil and a bitter thing sin is.

In the remainder of the chapter he unveils two successive stages of his personal biography; and in doing so plainly unfolds the normal operation of the law first in the case of the unregenerate and then of the regenerate sinner. The first stage again is subdivided into the *status securitatis* and the *status sub lege*. By a comparison of these two states of the unregenerate Paul, the apostle shows clearly that not the law but SIN taking advantage of the law is responsible for all the mischief and culpability. In the *status securitatis* he fondly imagined himself to be already in a condition of spiritual *life* and in the sure prospect of the life of blessed immortality hereafter. He was outwardly blameless and never should have known that *evil concupiscence* was wrong had not the tenth commandment expressly prohibited concupiscence after the things of one's neighbor. Before the law revealed his sin to him he lived secure and without emotion, but when the command of God came home to him

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in all its comprehensive scope and far reaching application, he thereupon *died* to all hope of salvation by his own works, and conscious for the first time of his true situation was at once plunged in despair and misery. This is the state *sub lege*. This extinction both of tranquility and hope was coincident with the awakening of the sense of guilt and ill deserving. Sin, which (like a torpid snake) had slumbered unmolested in his bosom, was now roused into malignant activity by the fierce blaze of the law, and after the same manner with the viper in the fable began at once to shoot the deadly venom of its cruel fangs into his heart's blood.

The mighty change which initiated *the regenerate stage* of Paul's experience had added no sanctifying power to the *law*. This tremendous revolution had not effected the extirpation of sin—though it had indeed given sin its death-blow. The converted as well as the unconverted man has to go through a momentous struggle. Only it is no longer merely the struggle between conscience and inclination—but also and characteristically the struggle between the remains of inbred corruption and the indestructible and victorious principle of grace. The contest is not a contest any more between the will and something else, but (so to say) between two wills—or rather, as it might seem, an internecine strife in the very bosom of the will itself. It was very like a

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conflict between two distinct *egos*, or personal *selves*. The apostle is however careful not to say this. On the contrary he sedulously avoids anything approaching such a statement. It is true he *does* speak here of two *egos*. But one of these is the comprehensible, personal, responsible, ego (including all that is bad as well as all that is good in Paul); the other, the better or regenerate ego. The crushed but by no means innocuous remainders of sin in him Paul does not exalt and magnify by calling them I. So far from it, he in all his better moments, and in his reigning disposition, protests with vehemence against his occasional departures into known sin. The author of these exceptional heinous acts is of course the very same responsible agent *Paul* the main tenour of whose new life is determined by the Holy Spirit. Yet the *true* Paul—Paul, that is to say in his higher, his nobler, his abiding disposition, Paul in the deepest recesses of his truest spiritual nature, resents and disowns these comparatively transient and yet (in one view of them) strictly Pauline deviations from the plumb-line of his renovated being. Yet while the conflict rages it is fierce and remorseless. Often in spite of all that he could do he would find his better and

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usually dominating will yielding to the seductions of detested sin. In such dire emergencies he could get no aid or comfort from the law. The law only extorted from him cries of bitter anguish. Under the law, as at the first, he is only driven to despair of his own resources, and it is the sweet and rich discovery of Gospel-grace alone that ever prompted him to utter pæans of exultant praise for deliverance.

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The connexion of this chapter is with all that goes before ; but more immediately with the exhibition of the sanctified experience that is made in the concluding portion of chapter VII. On a review of the whole argument the apostle sees abundant ground for the exclamation that the believer is safe, and that his final salvation is secured beyond peradventure. The inspired logician brings forward two decisive proofs of the averment, that the believer is once for all released from condemnation, and therefore can by no possibility ever again become subject to condemnation. One of these arguments is *a priori*, the other *a posteriori*. The *a priori* argument is partly concentrated in the illative particle of the first verse, which contains a summation of the entire reasoning of the first four chapters. It is also restated in the third and fourth verses.

The nature of the argument is fully unfolded in the preceding expository outlines of this course. It is that justification through grace and by faith alone is the only, but the adequate and the actual, method of the sinner's acceptance before God. This branch of the argument is based upon the fulfilment of the law in the sinner's room and stead by Jesus Christ, and the appropriation of his complete and finished righteousness on the part of the sinner by faith. The *a posteriori* argument is an argument from

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christian experience, and is involved in the subordinate discussion of the sixth and seventh chapters, but is recapitulated, and for the first time formally introduced, by the casual particle of the second verse. The argument is this. Inasmuch as it has been indubitably established that sanctification is possible only in the case of believers, considered as the justified subjects of Divine grace, it follows that the existence of sanctification in any given instance is proof positive that in that instance the sanctified person is also a believer and a justified subject of Divine grace.

The remainder of the apostle's twofold argumentation is brought in at a later stage. It is the special proof that once in grace, any one is always in grace.

To revert now to the first verse, the proposition of that verse is that ~~any~~ condemnation, whether present or future, is utterly impossible in the case of those who are graciously united to Jesus Christ. The proof immediately annexed, is the believer's emancipation, from the sovereign dominion of sin by the inward and potent operation of the Holy Ghost—in other words, from the believer's partial but genuine *sanctification*.

That the fact of the believer's sanctification is a relevant and cogent proof that the believer shall never again be condemned and fall anew under the penalty of God's

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law, is then unanswerably argued. The reasoning is plain and faultless. The fact that the believer is sanctified proves that the believer will never be condemned, because (as has now been established *ex abundanti*) the fact that the believer is sanctified proves that the believer has also been justified, and no justified person can afterwards (as is fully shown below) be condemned.

To put the thing in a nutshell: future condemnation is disproved by present sanctification. Present sanctification guarantees future non-condemnation, because present sanctification evinces past justification, and justification at any date in time ensures eternal non-condemnation. We are safe from hell and sure of heaven because we are sanctified: since our being sanctified carries with it the certainty that we have been justified, and our having been justified carries with it the certainty (as shown in the sequel) that we shall be glorified.

The law could not justify; but the gospel can, and does. The requirement of the law was fulfilled by our great substitute, and his spotless and Divine righteousness was imputed to us for our forensic acceptance.

It must be borne in mind, however, that this imputation takes place only in the case of those who lead holy lives. This limitation is absolutely necessary. Holy lives are

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the result of holy dispositions, and holy dispositions the result of holy natures. Such dispositions and such natures (and such alone) are under the control and dominion of the Holy Ghost. Worldly and carnal dispositions argue worldly and carnal natures, and *such* natures are hopelessly sunk in spiritual death, and therefore still under the penalty of the violated law.

The Roman converts were not in this fatally carnal condition, but, if (as was the judgment of charity) they were inhabited by the gracious Spirit they had been renewed and sanctified.

The spirit of God was the spirit of *life*; and the life imparted by that spirit was the life not only of the soul but of the *body*. Nearly all the argumentation of this chapter can be reduced to these two heads, viz. the absence of the death-dealing power of the *law*, and the presence of the *life-giving* power of the Spirit. The existence and prevalency of inbred corruption (the means of spiritual death) did not militate against the certainty of the believer's final welfare. For the indwelling spirit of God was the source and author of spiritual life. But neither did the sway of the last enemy over our mortal bodies contradict the glowing hope of the redeemed, for the indwelling spirit of God was equally the source and author of *physical* life, and would one day

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raise these vile (but then transformed) bodies from the dust.

What *folly*, then, (no less than culpability) it was to be the thralls of sin! Carnality meant physical and *eternal death*; but the mortification of the flesh and its desires would infallibly lead to LIFE. This was further evident from the fact that the believer is under the control and guidance of the Spirit; which evinced (on the principle already established) that the believer was a child of grace, and therefore a child of God. The Divine Son-ship of the believer was, moreover, to be soberly inferred from the believer's filial temper and the Spirit's conjoint witness with the testimony of the believer's happy consciousness.

But here (as under familiar Roman law and custom) to be a son was to be an heir; and in this case, to be heir was to be heir of all things—to be a joint heir with Christ, in his unspeakable inheritance.

There is notwithstanding one proviso. It is that we shall conjointly suffer with our Lord, as well as conjointly *reign* with him. But the very anguish is not only a preliminary but a *preparatory* to the glory that is to succeed it. Our sufferings are therefore at once a pledge and a vehicle (or procuring cause) of our reward.

The consideration of pain and sorrow is thus reduced to zero. For obviously in the first place there is—there can

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be no comparison (either as to their magnitude or their duration) between the tribulation of earth and time and the glory of eternity and heaven. In the second place, there is added to the natural and sustaining principle of hope those heavenly succours and that unearthly resignation and patience which are granted to the intercessions of that same Divine Spirit that ever occupies the faithful heart. In the third place, the suffering is a mean to the glory, and enters into that comprehensive and intricate scheme under which everything contributes to the well-being of the child of God. The trials of the believer, therefore, argue nothing against the certainty of his reward.

But he is *fallible*! and may one day perchance fail and apostatize. True! but God is *infallible*. He can *never* lapse or change. His infinitely perfect and adorable character is our effectual guarantee that we shall be eternally saved. The presence and prevalence of the Spirit of God in the breast of the believer is our constant safeguard against alarm and despair. Are we dead in trespasses and sins? Salvation is already *begun*. Do our bodies fall a prey to dissolution? The principle of resurrection life is within us. Do we suffer? The Spirit testifies that we are sons and intercedes in our behalf and in our troubled hearts with sighs too big for utterance. Are we weak and fickle? God is

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omnipotent and unchangeable; and the work of his Spirit ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ our hearts, in our renewal and sanctification, is irrefragable demonstration of our eternal blessedness. The chain of redemption is complete. There is no vacillation. Effectual calling is as sure as well as a practical criterion of election and predestination, for whatever God does in time he has purposed in eternity, and effectual grace is bestowed only on the chosen seed. But the election and predestination of the believer foretold with certainty his justification and ^a ~~sanctification~~ _{sanctification}, and his complete redemption.

The remainder of the chapter is made partly of arguments, but still more of pæans of victory. The great additional argument is *a fortiori*, and from the gift of Christ to rebellious sinners. It is also to be connected with the previous argument derived from the scope and efficacy of God's electing purpose and from the immutable and impeccable character of Jehovah. The *new* argument runs thus. If when we were aliens, transgressors, and foes God gave us the best he had to bestow—nay gave us *all*; he surely will not refuse any benefit to those who are now his friends.

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This consideration is strengthened by the view that in giving us *redemption* (now that all the mighty obstacles are out of the way) God is merely carrying out the very purposes for which Christ died.

The apostle now breaks forth into hallelujahs over the adorable love of Christ from which nothing in heaven or earth, in time or eternity, can ever sunder the ransomed follower of the crucified and risen and exalted Lord.

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The argument of the apostle in the previous chapters necessarily involved the conclusion that the great body of the Jewish nation of that day would perish. This was evident since their only hope of salvation was through the works of the law. But this seemed to carry with it the conclusion that God had rejected the chosen people, and consequently had broken his covenant promise. This objection the apostle anticipates and answers. But he not only answers the objections, but avails himself of the opportunity to discuss the entire dealing of God in the rejection of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles; and in so doing presents a perfect vindication of the Divine procedure in the whole matter.

Nothing could surpass the hallowed skill with which the unpleasant statements that he had to make are brought before his Jewish readers. He begins by asseverating in the most solemn and impressive manner that he is tenderly attached to them in the closest bonds of consanguinity and personal affection. Not content with this he even ventures to affirm that were it possible, and lawful, for him to do so in any case, he would actually be willing and ready to sacrifice his eternal happiness itself for their salvation. He not only loved them, but honored them; as the theocratic seed of the patriarch Jacob, as for ages the peculiar people

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of God, who were favoured with the Shekinah, the Sinaitic legislation, the Levitical ritual, and the Messianic promise. They were in the line of the most illustrious ancestry on the earth, and one made chiefly illustrious by the fact that it led up to the ever blessed Son of God even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who as to his humanity was of the lineage of David.

The apostle now comes at once to the objection, and utterly denies its validity. The point of that objection was that the Pauline doctrine involved the rejection of God's people, and the rejection of God's people the failure of the Divine promise. In reply to this the great apostolic reasoner admits the rejection of the Jews who are in a certain sense God's people, but denies that this invalidated the Abrahamic covenant.

The argument is two-fold. In the first place it was clear that God's covenant people and the literal seed of Abraham were not coextensive expressions. This he proves from the conceded fact that a large part of Abraham's natural descendants were excluded from the benefits of the Messianic blessing. Not the children of Hagar or Keturah, but the son of Sarah alone received the theocratic inheritance. Isaac alone was chosen, and Israel was rejected.

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The same thing was still more strikingly evinced in the family of *Isaac*, where a like discrimination was made between the two sons of one and the same free mother, and that were born at one and the same birth. Jacob was chosen and Esau (though the *elder*) was rejected. This instance surely ought to be decisive on another point.

The exercise of this elective discrimination on the part of Jehovah first in the family of Abraham and then in the family of Isaac was referred to by the apostle for a double purpose. It not only proved that "the seed." in the most important scope and meaning of the Abrahamic promise was a limited and not a universal one, but also established incontestably the doctrine of the *Divine sovereignty*, the great doctrine on which Paul bases his triumphant theology.

Now the selection of Jacob while yet in the womb, and the preterition of Esau, was a conspicuously cogent proof of that doctrine, not only for the reason already indicated but because while both infants had contracted the taint of original corruption neither (at the time of the choice) had yet committed any actual sin. That the choice was not due to a difference of *character* in the two cases was obvious and indisputable. The apostle at once passes from this to the inevitable conclusion that the event was due to

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sovereign election. He does not stop to meet the futile quibble that has since been advocated, that the choice was made on the ground of *foreseen* acts of faith and repentance. Foreknowledge itself implies foreordination. This link in the reasoning is omitted, probably because the Jewish protest had not assumed the shape that would have required it. It is impossible to believe, however, that the apostle could have entertained any such view without here mentioning it. On the contrary he plants himself on ground that is precisely opposite.

The national supremacy of theocratic Israel over Edom (as the individual supremacy of Jacob over Esau) was the type of the election of God's saints in all ages. God has in every instance acted as a sovereign and in a multitude of cases not called the ^egrater but the less. So Jacob was elected, Esau was rejected. Had there been no election both would have been hated for their sins. As it was, Esau was hated and Jacob was loved. The preference of one over the other was due not to superior merit in the one elected, but to causes fully adequate doubtless but unknown and undiscoverable by human reason.

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The apostle next takes up the objection that is pressed to-day against the so-called Calvinistic scheme, viz: that it is in conflict with the *justice of God*. This he peremptorily denies, and on two grounds. The first is that the Almighty *claims the right* to do as he has done, and the second is that he has exercised that right. That he has expressly claimed the right the apostle proves by an unanswerable citation from scripture. That he has exercised the right he evinces from the memorable instance of Pharaoh, showing that God set up the Egyptian monarch and caused him to figure as he did upon the page history for the very purpose of establishing the point in a striking historic manner that God compassionates, and reprobates, such human enemies as he pleases.

Before completing his rejoinder the apostle is here met with *another* objection that is constantly urged to-day against the Augustinian and so-called Calvinistic scheme. It is that the doctrine is consistent with man's *moral responsibility*, and that on this principle God could not justly punish sin. The pith of the objection is that the doctrine does away with free-agency, and thus amounts to fatalism. In his rejoinder to this, the apostle first demurs to the jurisdiction of the court, and indignantly protests against these

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attempts to arraign Jehovah before the bar of puny, fallible, and guilty man. Paul had just proved that God had actually *done* (in the case of Pharaoh) the very thing the objector alleged he had no right to do. The two objections are therefore logically reducible to this, that God was an unjust being. A more absurd and monstrous assertion, he proceeds to show, could not possibly be framed. This he evinces by the illustration of the different vessels deftly moulded out of the same mass of clay and turned by the potter from his revolving wheel. This illustration contains in an implied form the essential points of a new and final argument in rebuttal of this covert attack upon the righteousness of God. It is this. As the potter selects the material for his vessels (whether good or worthless) from the common mass of clay, so does God select the recipients of his saving mercy from the common mass of sinners. As they were all, in the eternal contemplation of the Divine Being, *sinners*, He might justly have reprobated all. He was therefore clearly justified in reprobating *some*. The preterition indeed was sovereign, but the reprobation proper was *judicial*. The real wonder was that God had saved *any*, and that he had ever borne so long with the wickedness of the obstinately impenitent. The failure of God to visit prompt and condign judgment on offenders was due how-

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ever not to their merit, but to his forbearance and mercy, and was in full consistancy with his intention to punish them at last. This compassionate delay in the execution of vengeance upon unrepented sin was moreover to be ascribed in part to God's purposes of grace and redemption as regards his own dear children. But the apostle now goes on to show that God had not only *claimed* and exercised the *right* of sovereign election *in the case of certain individuals*, but had frankly announced his intention of exercising the right of sovereign rejection in the case of the great majority of the Jewish nation, and of sovereignly electing a multitude of Gentiles to occupy their room. This he does by repeated and ample citations from the old Jewish scriptures. With the utmost delicacy he first proves (from Hosea) that God had announced his purpose to extend the gospel to the once unbelieving Gentile nation, and (from Isaiah) that but for his signal grace and loving kindness in sparing a remnant of the natural seed of Jacob, his purpose evidently had been not merely to decimate, but to exterminate the people of Israel.

It thus had come to pass that the ever careful Jew was reprobated, and the once careless Gentile elected. The explanation was that the Jew rejected, and the Gentile accepted the elect corner-stone predicted by Isaiah.

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Two points are evinced here: first that the terms of justification proposed in the gospel are the same as those under the old covenant, and that the old scriptures plainly announce God's intent to act as he did both as regards Jews and Gentiles, and second, that the difference in God's treatment of the two classes was due to the fact that one class accepted these terms and the other did not.

The chapter begins like the preceding with tender and conciliatory expressions. The apostle reiterates the assurance of the love he bears the chosen people. His great desire in their behalf was their salvation. He commends their zeal, but laments the directions it had taken. Ignorant of the true way of life they had sought to substitute their own works for the work of Christ, and the righteousness of the law for the righteousness of faith. The only righteousness that could satisfy the requirements of the law (as had been shown at an earlier stage of the argument) was a faultless and perfect obedience of its precepts. This could never be rendered by a sinful creature. In lieu of such a personal righteousness, thus unattainable to the sinner, the gospel offered the vicarious righteousness of the great substitute to all who were willing to put their trust in him. In the course of the previous argument it had been established that the one imperative and indispensable condition of justification is

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faith alone. The apostle now goes on to point out that faith was equally the condition of justification under the old covenant. The demand, therefore, of *faith* that has been so remorselessly exacted both from Jews and Gentiles is no novel or unreasonable demand. This had been clearly brought out in the case of Abraham. The position is now made good by a review of the scope of the ancient institutions. The very aim and intention of the law, in its crowning effort, was to lead up to Christ. Christ was at once its spirit and its goal.

In the normal state of things the only method of justification was by personal fulfilment of the legal precept. Under this method perfect obedience was essential to success. This the normal method of justification is undoubtedly referred to, and referred to repeatedly, in the Jewish scriptures. The language in this case is, "This do and thou shalt live." The apostle by a single quotation from Leviticus compresses all that is said elsewhere on this head.

But with the entailment of universal guilt as the penal consequence of the fall, this which is the normal method of justification became forever after impractical to the ordinary descendants of Adam. Now supervened the new and extraordinary method of justification through the vicarious and implied righteousness of Christ. From one point of

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view these two methods of justification are in principle the same. Looking at the matter from one view-point there is only one possible method of justification for any creature of God, and that is through the satisfaction of the Divine law, and the Divine law can only be satisfied by perfect obedience. Had the old normal method of justification prevailed we should have been saved (if saved at all) through our personal obedience. Under the new and gospel method we are saved (if saved at all) through the obedience of *another*, even of our *substitute*, which is charged to our account and appropriated by our personal faith.

The Jews are inexcusable in not finding the new method of justification in the old scriptures: it was the only method of justification that was open to their fathers, or indeed to any other guilty child of Adam since the fall. True, the precise nature of the method was expressed in different language under the older revelation and somewhat hidden beneath the types and shadows of the preparatory.

In essence, however, that method has ever been unchangeably the same. The apostle sees (and appears to marvel at his Rabbinical readers for not seeing) a mystical sense underlying certain words uttered by the great law-giver of Israel in the audience of the people from the Mount of Blessing. The passage is taken from a context in Deut.

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These words, however, only sum up the general teaching of the Pentateuch, and indeed the whole old Testament, on this subject. The language of the new and gospel method as thus abundantly declared is substantially this "Stop doing and *believe*; *believe* and thou shalt live." Moses the great mediator of the law was responsible for the one teaching as well as for the other. What else could he mean but *the righteousness of Christ* (approached and apprehended through the Jewish types). when he recommended to the Israelites a righteousness that was so accessible as to be immediately at hand and so entirely practicable as to be open to their instantaneous appropriation? The words of the great legislator were somewhat obscure, but sufficiently intelligible after close scrutiny. Why, he urges, pursue the protracted quest for justification through the depths of unfathomable space, when the righteousness they thus vainly sought to find was at their very doors? After what the Saviour had done, and suffered, and promised to bestow, such quest could only spring from unmitigated unbelief. It was constructively a denial of the validity of his work of Redemption. To ascend to the skies on their futile errand was as though they would renew the incarnation, to descend to the grave, as though they dreamed of repeating the Resurrection.

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The apostle then explains further that the word thus enigmatically pronounced by Moses in the very body of the Jewish law itself is identical in pith and substance with the message of the gospel.

They were not to imagine, either, that a formal and outward profession of their faith was all that was required. Religion was an affair not only of the lips but of the heart. Articulate, or external, acknowledgment of the claims of the Redeemer was indeed called for; but the vital obligation was the sincere and inward homage of the soul. The old scriptures were, in their way, just as full of this doctrine as the new. Thus Isaiah had declared that no *believer* whatsoever should ever be discomfited or put to shame. The prophet's language is unambiguous. There is no discrimination between the Jew and the Gentile. The ground for that liberality was solid and sure. The same God is God alike of Gentile and of Jew, and is strictly impartial between them, and glorious in his mercy and grace to both of them. But they must address him in faith. On this point the prophet Joel substantiates the assurance of Isaiah, and says even more expressly, whoever calls on the Lord's name shall be saved. On the basis of this citation from the mouth of Joel, the apostle constructs an unanswerable sorites in order to prove that God intended to confer

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The apostle in the two previous chapters had evinced that God is a sovereign in the distribution of his favours, and consequently has a right to elect and reprobate whom he pleases. He had further shown from scripture that because of the unfaithfulness of the Jewish nation God had announced his intention to reject the greater part of them, and to call the Gentiles to occupy the place which the Jews had forfeited: but that God had done this neither arbitrarily nor secretly. He had not done it *arbitrarily*, but for a *cause*: the Gentiles had *believed*, the Jews had *not* believed. He had not done it secretly. Besides the plain declaration in advance that he was going to do as he had done the whole old Testament, and even the Pentateuch itself was full of the same gospel on account of the abandonment of which the catastrophe had fallen on the ancient Israel.

In the present chapter he establishes two points. The *fact* is, that the rejection of the Jewish nation was never *total*; the *second* is, that the rejection even of *the body* of the Jewish nation was not *final*. He takes up these two points in their order.

The positions already made good in Paul's argument seemed to be inconsistent with Jehovah's Covenant with the chosen people. So far the apostle has contented himself with proving that the Almighty had never pledged himself to

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save the whole literal Israel, and that he had a seed also among the Gentiles.

He now concedes the point to the objector that the covenant promise *was* in great part, a *promise* of extraordinary and saving blessing even to *the Jews*. But the positions Paul had taken in this argument were in no degree in conflict with that promise. For in the first place the rejection of the Jewish people had *never* been a rejection of the entire nation. Paul himself gloried in his descent from the royal and theocratic tribe of Benjamin, and could not be suspected of asserting the fact of his own reprobation. But not only he, but many others of every age, had been saved out of the community of the literal Israel. There had always been a remnant elected, even when the bulk of the nation had been left to perish. Even in the evil days of idolatrous *Ahab*, there were as many as seven thousand "hidden ones" that were faithful to Jehovah. This he proves by a citation from the inspired record. The election of these favoured Jews (agreeably to the principles established in the 9th and 10th chapters) was a sovereign, and consequently a *gracious*, election, and grace (as was proved in the *fourth* chapter) excluded everything in the shape of a work-righteousness on which the election could conceivably have been based.

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The upshot then was this. The entire nation of Israel has not obtained salvation; but in every age a select and representative portion of the nation *had* obtained salvation. This was in precise accordance with predictions of Isaiah and David that so far from saving all the nation God would send upon the ancient people a spirit of blindness and stupefaction, and visit them with his retributive anger, as the personal consequence of their obdurate unbelief.

But it was *not the design* of God to exclude the bulk of the Jewish nation *always* from his favour. The rejection of the body of that people was no more certainly decreed than their ultimate restoration. Their apostasy was rather of the nature of a *stumbling*, from which there is recovery. than of a *fall*, where there is prostration and irreparable injury. The temporary defection of the Jews was made to contribute under Divine Providence to the more rapid and extensive proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles. This in its turn would excite the emulation of the Jews. And it was easy to see, that if the *decimation* of the Jewish people had thus been blest to the Gentiles, the *victorious reinforcement* of the thinned Jewish columns would be the signal of the latter day glory that was one day to overspread the globe.

Paul had not forgotten that he was the apostle not to

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the Jews but to the Gentiles. By being instrumental in the conversion of the Jews he hastened the day for the universal conquest of the world to Christ, and was thus proceeding in the exercise of the authority vested in him by his commission as the missionary apostle of the outlying tracts of heathen darkness.

The prospect of the restoration of the Jews to the divine favour was every way a reasonable one. God was unchangeable even in his friendships, and (when other things were equal) the children of his ancient friend were dead to him. The early patriarchs were, so to speak, *the first fruits*, and their descendants *the mass of dough* that was consecrated by the original offering. Abraham was the *root*, the Jewish people were the branches; and the same sap permeated the entire tree.

The olive-tree of which the apostle now begins to speak is the *Abrahamic church* under both dispensations. From this olive-tree certain of the Jewish branches had been excinded, and alien or Gentile branches been budded in. The oleaster grafts might as well set themselves up against the native olive branches amongst which they had been artificially inserted, as for these Gentile converts to plume themselves above the original and native stock of Israel. Neither Jews nor Gentiles drew their living nourishment from them-

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selves, but from the Abrahamic promise. Such boastings as the Gentiles were prone to indulge in might almost seem to imply that they imagined that *they supported the root* instead of being supported by the root, There was grave reason for apprehension, rather than for over-confidence. If God had rejected his ancient people when they sinned, aliens surely were safe only so long as they were constant. God's benevolence had in that case interposed no bar to his vindicatory justice. Neither would it do so in their case.

If the Jews embraced the gospel they would be received with open arms. God was able and willing to take them back again. On the other hand it was as certain as any destiny could be, that if the Gentiles renounced the gospel they would themselves be given up by the God of Israel. The Jews had been in the natural course of salvation. The Gentiles had been introduced into the church not by a natural but an artificial process. Unbelief on the part of the Jews had occasioned their rejection: *a fortiori*, unbelief would prove disastrous in the case of the Gentiles.

Yet God had mercy in store for the literal seed of Abraham. The partial blindness that had been visited upon them was only to last until the complete ingathering of the Gentiles prior to the universal spread of the gospel. Then once

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more the body of the Jewish nation should be brought into the church. This the Apostle asserts on his own authority, but confirms by a massed citation [Is. 59: 20 and 21 &c.] from various scriptures. The predicted deliverer (or Redeemer) should come victoriously out of Mount Zion, and remove the sin of Israel. The covenant promise was that God would purge their iniquities. [Jer. 31: 33.]

Alienated for a time though the Jews had been, they had yet by that very alienation advanced the privileges of the Gentiles. In the meanwhile God had not forgotten the assurances that had been given to the patriarchs; and his purposes are immutable, and his grants irrevocable.

Formerly, and originally, aliens the Gentiles had been blessed by means of the Jewish defection. So the alienated Jews, cut off for unbelief, were one day to receive mercy through the channel of the favour shown to the Gentiles.

God had allowed both Gentiles and Jews to fall into a condition of protracted unbelief in order that he might signalize his wondrous grace in saving myriads of both classes.

The Apostle concludes with an outburst of wonder and adoration [modelled upon Is. 40: 13, 14.] as he contemplates the mysterious perfections and operations of the Divine Being as exhibited in the glorious plan of Redemption.

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With the twelfth chapter begins the discussion of the Apostolic Ethics. This is distinctively the practical part of the epistle. The subordinate topics are somewhat interwoven. Speaking roughly, chap. xii. is an exhibition of *our duties to God*, and to society, viewed in their most general aspect. Chapter xiii. presents a succinct view of *our duties to the state*—to which are appended various social duties. Chapter xiv. and a considerable portion of chap. xv. are occupied with a discussion of *our duties to the church*—especially those growing out of the relations between “the weak” and “the strong.” The remainder of the book is given up to salutations and other personal matter.

The general practice of holiness had already been earnestly enjoined and recommended in the sixth chapter, where the doctrine of sanctification was introduced and considered. The apostle now repeats in substance the exhortations already given, basing them however on all that precedes in the dogmatic part of the book, and goes on to class and specify certain of the particular duties incumbent on the members of the church of Rome and on the church at large.

God demands no more that he be worshiped, as under the Levitical institutions, through the forms of an outward ritual, but requires the sincere homage of an inward soul. This of course carried with it the consecration of the whole

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man—*body* as well as spirit, to the Lord.

The writer urges them to humility, sobriety of judgment in regard to their own qualifications and attainments, and consideration for the feelings and necessities of others: also to an appropriate and faithful exercise of the several gifts with which God had endowed them. they were to remember that as in the human body, so in the church, unity in the organism was consistent with a diversity of members and organs. And as in the body, so in the church, one member (or organ) ought not to usurp or hinder the function of another. Each member, each office-bearer of the church ought to attend to his own peculiar business, and show diligence and fidelity in the performance of this his allotted task. He specifies those to whom had been entrusted the gift of prophecy, of ministration, of instruction, of hortation, of distribution, of rule, of compassionate service. Then follows a bright catalogue of christian virtues and graces, which he bids them emulate: undissembled love toward all: general probity of conduct; humble and self-abnegating affection for the brethren; diligence, and zeal, in every good work: joy; hope, patience, prayerfulness, liberality towards the Lord's poor; hospitality; a forgiving temper; Christlike sympathy—both with those in trouble and those in gladness; unity of sentiment; unambitious lowliness of disposition.

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He would guard them against self-conceit. He charges them to avoid sedulously a spirit of revengeful retaliation. He would have them study to exhibit such fair and amiable qualities of holiness in their relations with the world around them that enmity itself should be disarmed. As *two* are necessary to a quarrel, he enjoines it upon every one of them to make sure that *he* at least is not one of two quarreling parties; and to live at peace (so far as he was able to do so) with all with whom he was associated. Vengeance was the exclusive prerogative of THE ALMIGHTY. The apostle substantiates this averment from ancient scripture. To take vengeance into one's own hands was thus to invade the peculiar and unchangeable privilege of Jehovah. So they were to return good for evil, and thus should melt down and vanquish their adversary by *love*. Instead of being themselves overcome by the evil, they would in this way overcome the evil by the good.

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This chapter treats principally of our duties to the state. From what is incumbent on us in relation to those in authority, the apostle naturally passes on to what is due from us to men in general—and sums up the entire obedience required by the law (after the manner of the saviour) in the one word, LOVE. This comprehensive view of these related topics is the more appropriate inasmuch as the various duties enjoined are all presented in their distinctively religious aspect. They are enforced by a variety of considerations, the last of which is drawn from the nearness of the Parousia.

The chapter begins with a general injunction upon every man to obey those in high authority. The special reference to the Emperor at Rome could not be missed by Paul's readers, and was the more suitable from the circumstance that the Jews after their subjection were a turbulent people, and that even the Jewish christians questioned the right of Caesar to exact their allegiance.

The foundation of the injunction was the ordinance of God in constituting the state: in virtue of which all *de facto* governments have (for the time being at least) a Divine sanction. To resist a regularly constituted government whether in the way of ordinary crime or of "privy conspiracy and rebellion," was therefore to resist the authority of God Almighty himself. This argument is reinforced by another.

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derived from self-interest. Resistance would be followed by punishment. On the other hand obedience would be correspondingly rewarded with safety.

In the ideal condition of things, as well as under all governments properly administered, criminals alone had reason to fear the penalties denounced by public justice. This was as yet the case even at Rome, for these were the early halcyon days of Nero's dark and evil reign.

The way to escape the legal penalties was, consequently to keep the legal requirements. The state was God's instrument for blessing the deserving members of the community. But it was equally God's instrument for scourging malefactors. Transgressors then had just cause to tremble. *The sword* borne by the officer of justice was the symbol of that condign vengeance which it was his prerogative to execute on all grievous offenders.

The two motives with which the writer urges the Roman christians are, accordingly, a sense of duty and a dread of harm. The *duty* of obeying the officers of the law had been already plainly recognized in the submission of the Jewish subjects to the Roman taxes. The apostle lays new stress on the fact that the collectors of the public revenue were sustained not only by the power of the imperial eagles, but by the *imprimatur* of the eternal King of heaven.

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It was therefore a clear case, that they ought to treat the official representatives of the state with due respect and deference, and perform all the acts required at the hands of good and law-abiding citizens. whether it was customs, or imports, or obedience in any form, that was demanded of them, an honourable compliance was their bounden duty as before God as well as men.

They were not to cheat the officer of justice. No more were they to defraud any man. All debts (whether pecuniary or other) should be punctiliously paid. The only obligation to which this precept was not fully applicable, was the obligation to love one another. The debt of love could never be discharged (with acquittance in full) because it was inexhaustable. The absolutely perfect satisfaction of the claim of love presupposed (on the principle laid down by the Redeemer) the absolutely perfect fulfilment of the law. Benevolence was incompatible with mischief or injury; such as was involved in every violation of the commands of the second table.

It was high time, too, for the greatest promptness and energy in the preformance of the work assigned to them, for *the night* was nearly gone and *the day* at hand. *Life* was fleeting—opportunity was scant and limited—*death* was the end as well of toil, and sorrow, as of privilege. Everything

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of the nature of sloth or slumber should be laid aside with the nocturnal shadows. As *the dawn* approached they should be up and doing. But not only the career of individual believers, but the present dispensation of grace for the church at large, was almost at the point where darkness ended and where day began. The Lord would soon come and sit upon his Judgment-Throne. The hour of their complete redemption was imminent. What an incentive to every form of holy living.

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From the first verse of this chapter to the fourteenth verse of the fifteenth chapter, the apostle considers *the duties* of CHURCH MEMBERS as affected by their relations *inter se*. There were two classes in the church of Rome, as in the church at Corinth. These he denominates respectively "the weak" and "the strong." The "weak" brethren were doubtless mostly Jews, or still under the influence of Jewish prepossessions and prejudices. The consciences of the "weak" brother was still somewhat dark as to the extent of his christian privileges. The "strong" on the other hand, were for the most part, no doubt, Gentiles. and having been more thoroughly enlightened could do many things with a clear conscience that the "weak" could not do without sin.

Some of the weaker brethren insisted upon total abstinence from flesh. Some, again, made a point of observing the sacred days of the Jews. The refusal to partake of animal food was either due to the impression that the mosaic law was still binding, and distinction between clean and unclean meats still in force, or else (as in Corinth) it was for fear of contamination with idol sacrifices. In either of these cases it was attributable to overscrupulous precaution. It is by no means improbable, however, that the prohibition of flesh is to be referred to the influence of Essene views. Or all these reasons may have operated in concert in the case

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of different individuals.

The apostle first addresses himself to the "strong" and exhorts him to respect the conscientious though erroneous scruples of his weaker brother. He was not because of such scruples to hesitate to fellowship him, much less to treat him with contempt, and was not to take him to task for what he looked upon as his unreasonable doubts.

So too, on *his* part, the "weak" brother was not to form a sensorious judgment of what he esteemed the lax and unwarrantable conduct of the "strong."

The strong brother should bear in mind that God had accepted his weaker brother as well as himself. That was decisive. No man had any business to lord it over the servant of another; and it was equally absurd for one to condemn a servant when that servant's master approved him. In spite of certain frailties and infirmities the weak brother was a *true* brother still, and dear to the saviour; and the same Almighty power that saved the strong, would save *him* too.

The great matter was for every christian to act in consonance with the clear dictates of his own conscience. So long as each one was observed to do this, his actions in regard to things indifferent in themselves was not to be severely censured. As the conduct of both classes of church-

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members was in general seen to be regulated by a view to the Divine glory, it was sufficiently evident that both classes were actuated not only by sincere motives but by christian sentiments. Every true believer among them in every act while living, and in the very act of *dying*, tried to have a supreme regard to the will of Christ. Living or dying, then, these at least were devoted followers and subjects of the Lord Jesus. This was the very end contemplated by the death and resurrection of the Redeemer, viz. the exercise of Divine lordship over all believers whether dead or living.

The final adjudication of all controversies as well as the determination as to who were faithful would be at the Last Day. To anticipate the decisions of that dread assize was the height of temerity and folly. God had relegated the judgment of saint and sinner to that awful bar, and would conduct that judgment in person. To attempt to forestall these regular and tremendous proceedings, by setting up a petty and unauthorized court of conscience on earth, was at once absurd and reprehensible. Before that solemn and majestic tribunal every man, whether impenitent or believing, whether the one censuring or the one censured, would one day be cited to appear and give account not of *another's* conduct but of his *own*.

“The strong” instead of carping at “the weak” should

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take care not to be the occasion of his stumbling in the christian course. Paul himself sympathized in a general way personally with the views and feelings of the more enlightened; and justifies their conviction that there was nothing in the commands of Christ to render the compliances of the less enlightened with the Jewish exactions in themselves obligatory. Yet they should avoid doing *anything* (however innocent on other grounds) of which the legitimate tendency would be to injure the character, or hinder the progress, of Christ's humblest disciple. Abstinence from flesh was not prescribed by authority, but might well be conceded by love. Those for whom the saviour bled and died on Calvary, ought to be sedulously guarded from the road that leads to ruin.

The "strong" were theoretically in the right. They were nevertheless so to exercise their privilege as not to invade the precincts held sacred in the tender scruples of the "weak." True religion was an affair not of externals, but of *the head*; and for that very reason brethren ought not to contend with acrimony over mere outward observances. He sums up as he began by bidding each class make affectionate allowances for the othes, and do nothing that would naturally mar the other's peace or wound the other's conscience. It was noble to abstain entirely from flesh and wine, if by partaking we gave cause for scandal. If a man was convinced

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he had a right to act boldly in these matters, he was at liberty to do so, with the restriction just suggested. But the man who partook of flesh, or anything else, without the approbation of his conscience, committed sin.

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In this chapter the apostle continues the same topic, viz. the reciprocal duties of church-members, and pursues it as far as the fourteenth verse. After that the writer introduces some most interesting explanatory and personal matter, and winds up the epistle in the next chapter with salutations and the benediction, a precious assurance, and the apostolic benediction.

The grand argument of this 15th chapter by which he urges upon "the strong" consideration for the infirmities of their less enlightened brethren is the example of the blessed Redeemer. So far from consulting his own inclinations Christ sacrificed himself for sinners. The ancient scriptures were written for our instruction and profit; and they tell how the incarnate Messiah was to bear the contumely of the wicked men, in order to save the most abandoned of the human race. The apostle prays that God would infuse a kindred spirit of devoted self-renunciation into the hearts of the Roman believers; so that with united lips and harmonious efforts they might praise God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

He accordingly exhorts them anew, and this time because of the sublime pattern of humility and self-denial set them by the saviour, to open their arms to one another in the way of loving christian fellowship; and thus glorify God as Christ had done.

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Then follows the substantiation of this averment respecting Christ; who had become God's theocratic minister to the Jews, and also God's herald of salvation to the Gentile world.

The covenant that was sealed by circumcision was thus confirmed to the faithful seed of Israel, and saving mercy was extended even to the most degraded heathen. The extension of gospel privilege beyond the pale of Judaism had been abundantly predicted by the writers of the old Testament. This the apostle had triumphantly evinced before (in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters) but now corroborates by several passages of scriptures Ps. 17 (18). 30; Deut. 32. 43; Ps. 116 (117). 1; Is. 11; 10). The Psalmist had repeatedly foretold that the nations should "glorify God for his mercy," and should join universally the exultant praises of his people. In Deuteronomy it was declared that the Divine name should be celebrated among the Gentiles. Isaiah, too, had predicted of "the root of Jesse" that he should rule the nations, and that the nations should put all their hopes upon him.

He then prays that God would bless them richly with hope and joy and every christian grace through the omnipotent Spirit.

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This brings us to the fourteenth verse. At this point the apostle introduces what has been called [Meyer] an "epilogue," which occupies the remainder of the chapter. This "epilogue" has reference to the mutual relations between Paul and the Romans. He begins by giving them full credit for sincerity, intelligence, and high christian character. His admonitions were intended as adjuvants to their further growth in grace.

He had in some instances ventured to write boldly and plainly to them, knowing that they were aware that God had set him in the church for the very purpose as the apostle of the Gentiles. As the old Levitical priest administered the law, so (in some manner) Paul administered the gospel. As that venerable functionary presented the lamb at the altar, so the apostle would present his converts as an offering acceptable to God through Jesus Christ and sanctified (not by ritual oblation) but by the Holy Ghost.

The great missionary regarded these converts as his "crown of rejoicing" in Christ Jesus. He gave all the glory to Christ, and would never have presumed to make mention of the success of his own labours in the ministry had not the whole efficiency of the work been due to his adorable

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Redeemer. Through him, however, Paul had been enabled to sweep from Jerusalem and the adjacent regions over the whole of Asia Minor and as far as the boundaries of Illyria. Throughout this entire field of operations God had sustained him by supernatural help, and vouchsafed to him the privilege of extending the gospel of Christ to the utmost limit contemplated in the Divine plan as the terminus of his apostolic activity.

His ambition (so to speak) had been to found new churches, and consequently to go where no minister of the word had been before (Is. 52: 15). Thus Isaiah had referred prophetically to the extension of the gospel to those who were before in total ignorance of its blessings.

Up to the time of writing this epistle these zealous toils had prevented the apostle from carrying out his cherished wish of visiting the Christians of the church of Rome. Even now he proposed to go to Jerusalem first, in order to convey the benedictions of the Macedonian and Achaean churches to the poor saints of Judea. It was at once benevolent and just that the churches should exchange temporal for spiritual benefits in this way. When he had delivered this contribution he hoped to pass through Italy on

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his way to Spain, and stop awhile at Rome.

When he came he was confident it would be with a rich blessing for them, in the good providence of God.

Most earnestly he entreats them that his errand to Jerusalem may not be thwarted either by hostility on the part of the Jews or of the Roman authorities, and that he might be permitted to return to them with a glad heart, and find solace in their helpful company. He invokes the benediction of the God of peace upon them all.

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The last chapter of the book is almost exclusively taken up with personal salutations and doxological matter. The doxologies are near the close. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to numerous individual and friendly messages. Many of these were apparently converted freed-men of the Emperor. The self-sacrificing Phœbe, of the church of Cenchrea—one of the two ports of Corinth—who seems to have been the bearer of this letter, and was recommended to the Roman Christians fitly heads the list. Then follow greetings to Prisca and Aquila (who had risked their lives) and their household congregation; to Epaenetus, to Mary, to Aneronicus, to Junias, to Ampliatus, Urbanus, and Stachys, to Apelles, to the members of the household of Aristobulus, to Herodian, and Narcissus, to Tryphaena and Tryphosa; to Persis, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas; to Philologus, and Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and all the good people with them.

In the comprehensive salutatory of the Apostle at Corinth to the believers at Rome, the several churches of that whole region cordially joined. The symbol of the well-wishing was the kiss of charity.

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The only exception to what has been said as to the contents of the chapter is the solemn warning which is introduced just after the christian greetings against feuds, scandals, and heresies. The errorists who would lead them astray, and made use of such fair-seeming and enticing speech were actuated by carnal and sensual motives. The unwary might easily be beguiled by these seducers; but the Apostle bears cheerful and emphatic testimony to the general soundness of the Roman church. In fact their high character for orthodoxy and good conduct had already been extensively noised throughout the empire. He only wished this admirable state of things to be continued. If they were wise as well as resolute, in thwarting the machinations of satan, God would crown their fortitude and zeal with victory.

He breathes to heaven the ardent wish that the grace of their Divine Saviour might abide with them.

Individuals no less than churches added the volume of their feelings to the Apostle's salutation. Timothy, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, acceded to these greetings.

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Some of these he claims as kindred. The amanuensis, Tertius, salutes them in his own name. Gaius, the honoured host of Paul himself and of God's people generally in Corinth, expressly desired their welfare. So also did Erastus, the treasurer of the city, and the devoted Quartus.

Then comes the sublime ascription of glory to the only wise God and Jesus Christ with which the chapter, the grand division, and the entire treatise is brought to an end. The omnipotence of God is celebrated, which is abundantly adequate to keep them steadfast in the Pauline—which is also the Christian—doctrine: a doctrine once hidden and secluded for ages: but now clearly revealed by God's appointed prophets and universally promulgated to mankind, and in such a way as to conquer their assent and their acceptance.

